

Application No. 09/781,110
Amendment "B" dated August 2005
Reply to Office Action mailed July 13, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) In an entertainment system that includes a video recording apparatus, a method for automatically recording a fragmented program that includes a series of fragments that are temporally separated from each other and that have been designated as being related one to another, the method comprising the acts of:

providing a list of categories that include one or more fragmented programs for selection to a user;

upon receiving user selection of one of the categories, identifying with electronic program guide data each of one or more fragmented programs that corresponds to the selected category and that is scheduled to be displayed during a specific period of time, wherein the electronic program guide data used to identify the one or more fragmented programs includes a unique identifier that is specific to a fragmented program and is common to each fragment within a corresponding fragmented program and such that each fragment corresponding to the fragmented program have a same unique identifier associated with each of the one or more fragmented programs and that is distinguished from a program title;

displaying in a fragmented program list, each of the identified one or more fragmented programs corresponding to the selected category, wherein the fragmented program list only includes the identified one or more fragmented programs;

receiving user input requesting one or more of the displayed fragmented programs in the list to be recorded without requiring the user to separately identify each of the fragments associated with the fragmented programs;

in response to said user input selecting one or more of the displayed fragmented programs, examining the electronic program guide data and identifying each of the fragments corresponding to the selected one or more fragmented programs, for each of the identified fragments, automatically determining a start time for the fragment and recording the fragment with the video recording apparatus when the fragment is aired.

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2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the acts of:
determining an end time for the fragment; and
deactuating the video recording apparatus when the fragment is completed.
3. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the fragmented program is a mini-series.
4. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the fragmented program is a sporting event.
5. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the fragmented program is a group of television programs on a television network that are designated as being related.
- 6-8. (Cancelled).
9. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, further including the act of repeatedly updating the system for each of the fragments as to said start time for the fragment through the use of current electronic program guide data.
10. (Original) A method as recited in claim 9, wherein said act of repeatedly updating further includes identifying when a scheduling change occurs for any of the fragments.
11. (Original) A method as recited in claim 2, further including the acts of:
determining whether the fragmented program is reoccurring; and
if the fragmented program is reoccurring, automatically setting a reminder to record a subsequent occurrence of the fragmented program.

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12. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

receiving user input specifying that episodes of a television program are to be recorded;
and

in response to said user input, and iteratively during the period of time, performing the following acts, such that a plurality of episodes of the television program are recorded without recording particular episodes more than once:

using electronic program guide data to identify an episode of the television program;

determining whether said episode has been previously recorded;

if it is determined that said episode has not been previously recorded, automatically recording said episode; and

if it is determined that said episode has been previously recorded, automatically refraining from recording said episode.

13. (Original) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein said electronic program guide data includes an identifier to uniquely identify said episode.

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14. (Original) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein said act of using electronic program guide data further includes updating the system as to any programming change related to said episode.

15. (Original) A method as recited in claim 12, further performing the acts of:
determining whether said television program is reoccurring; and
if said television program is reoccurring, automatically setting a reminder to record a subsequent occurrence of said television program.

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16. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
receiving user input specifying that first-run episodes of a television program during the period of time are to be recorded;
using electronic program guide data to identify each of the first-run episodes of the television program that are scheduled to be aired during the period of time; and
for each of the first-run episodes, performing the acts of:
determining whether a first-run episode has been aired;
if it is determined that said first-run episode has not been aired, automatically recording said first-run episode; and
if it is determined that said first-run episode has been previously aired, performing the acts of:
determining whether said first-run episode is scheduled to be aired at a future time; and
if said first-run episode is scheduled to be aired at a future time, automatically recording said first-run episode at said future time.

17. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16, wherein upon determining that said first-run episode has been previously aired, further performing the act of if said first-run episode is not scheduled to be aired at a future time, informing a viewer that said first-run episode has already aired and is not scheduled to be aired at a future time.

18. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16, wherein said electronic program guide data includes an identifier to uniquely identify each of the first-run episodes.

19. (Original) A method as recited in claim 16, wherein said act of using electronic program guide data further includes updating the system as to a programming change related to the first-run episodes.

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20. (Original) A method as recited in claim 19, wherein if said programming change relates to a new time of airing one of the first-run episodes, which was originally determined to have already aired and was not scheduled to air at a future time, further performing the act of automatically recording said one of the first-run episodes at said new time.

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21. (Currently Amended) A recording system for recording video data corresponding to a fragmented program, the recording system comprising:

a signal receiver for receiving a signal that carries programming, wherein said programming includes a fragmented program, which includes a plurality of fragments that are scheduled to be aired over a series of days;

a user input interface coupled to said signal input, wherein said user interface provides a list of categories that correspond to a plurality of fragmented programs, and a fragmented program list that is displayed in response to a user selection of a category from the list of categories, the fragmented program list displaying each of and only one or more identified fragmented programs corresponding to the selected category, -and

wherein upon receipt of additional user input selecting one of the fragmented programs from the user input interface, the recording system uses electronic program guide data is used to identify each of a plurality of fragments of said selected fragmented program, wherein the electronic program guide data used to identify the one or more fragmented programs includes a unique identifier that is specific to a fragmented program and is common to each fragment within a corresponding fragmented program and such that each fragment corresponding to the fragmented program have a same unique identifier; and

a signal recorder coupled to said signal input for sequentially recording onto a storage medium each of said plurality of fragments.

22. (Original) A recording system as recited in claim 21, wherein said electronic program guide data includes an identifier that is common to said fragments and uniquely identifies said fragments from the programs.

23. (Original) A recording system as recited in claim 21, wherein said electronic program guide data includes a common title to identify each said fragment.

24. (Cancelled).

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25. (Original) A recording system as recited in claim 21, further including a recording list preserved on a storage device coupled to said user input interface, wherein said recording list itemizes one or more fragmented programs that correspond to said plurality of fragments to be recorded.

26. (Previously Presented) A computer program product for implementing within a home entertainment system a method for recording a fragmented program so as to provide a viewer a collection of all of the fragments of the fragmented program, the computer program product comprising one or more computer-readable media having computer executable instructions for implementing the method of claim 1.

27. (Cancelled).

28. (Original) A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein said act of examining electronic program guide data further includes identifying any scheduling change in the airing of said series of fragments.

29. (Original) A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein if said user input includes a request to only record fragments of the fragmented program that are first-run episodes, said act of examining further includes determining whether any of said series of fragments is a first-run episode, and wherein said act of sequentially recording further includes recording only fragments that are first-run episodes.

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30. (Original) A computer program product as recited in claim 26, further including the acts of:

determining whether the fragmented program is reoccurring; and
if the fragmented program is reoccurring, automatically setting a reminder to record a subsequent occurrence of the fragmented program.

31. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, further including:

determining that a conflict exists with recording a particular one of the identified fragments and at least one other program; and

resolving the conflict such that the particular fragment and the at least one other program can all be recorded, wherein resolving the conflict includes determining that the particular fragment or at least one other program will be rebroadcast at a different time on a same or a different channel.

32. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein at least one of the fragmented programs includes a plurality of corresponding fragments which are broadcast over a plurality of different networks.

33. (New) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said one of the categories is defined as a group of related programming including at least one of sports, mini-series, sitcoms or news broadcasts.